

COUNTY NEWS



PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

August 2002

County Earns National Honors

Fourteen County programs were honored last month with National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Awards. The competition recognizes "responsible, responsive and effective county government."

"I'm extremely proud that so many of our programs were recognized for excellence," said Chief Administrative Officer Walt Ekard. "These awards tell the world something we already knew—that is, San Diego County employees are leaders in establishing best practices, maintaining high standards of quality and crafting innovative solutions and partnerships."

NACo's primary role is to represent county government interests at the federal government level in Washington, D.C. The Achievement Awards program has been in place for 33 years and this year's awards were presented during the organization's annual conference.

The County's 2002 NACo Achievement Awards included two "Best of Category" Awards. Those awards were for the County's Securitization of Tobacco Settlement Revenues, and A Career Ladder from Clerical Support to Environmental Health Professional.



*Supervisors
Greg Cox and
Ron Roberts
celebrate
graduation day
with the San
Pasqual
Academy's
first
graduates.*

Also during the NACo conference, Supervisors Ron Roberts and Greg Cox received a special award for their work in creating the San Pasqual Academy for foster teens. Named the Caucus Courthouse Award, it recognizes elected officials for improving the lives of citizens through outstanding governance and strong leadership. In addition to accepting the award, the supervisors also received a \$5,000 scholarship that will be split among the academy's first three graduates to help pay their college tuition and school-related expenses.

For a complete list of the County's awards visit "County News Extra," in the online version of County News (see staff box on page 4) or log onto NACo's Web site at www.naco.org.

CECO Allocations Committee Makes Most of Donor Dollars



Each year dozens of representatives from non-profit organizations make the walk to the front of the room at the annual County Employees Charitable Organization (CECO) luncheon and, with much gratitude, accept a check written on behalf of County employees.

While the check presentation is quick, the process for deciding which organizations gets the funds donated by County staff is anything but simple. The luncheon may be months away, but the CECO Allocations Committee has been hard at work all summer to determine who will benefit from our collective generosity.

So what happens behind the scenes to determine which non-profits will be invited forward to receive a check? Each year, CECO provides organizations with the opportunity to fill out a grant application. This year alone there were 134 requests for help, totaling \$620,716. With \$243,000 to distribute, the allocations process became especially crucial.

The allocations process involved the CECO board of directors and other CECO members broken into teams of three to four people. Each team reviewed approximately 30 applications, and recommended to the full committee which organizations should receive money and how much each should get.

After the initial recommendations were made, the Allocations Committee painstakingly reviewed the list until it could be pared down to the amount of money available.

This "final" list is in the process of being distributed to the CECO board of directors, which has one or more representatives from each department. These directors are charged with taking that list back to their departments or work groups, where employees have 30 days to review it. On September 9 the CECO board will meet to vote on the final grant recipients.

As soon as this information is available, a copy will be posted in the online version of County News. For more information about the allocations process, contact your department CECO board member or CECO President Phyllis House at (619) 338-2765 or phousehe@co.san-diego.ca.us.



*A Copley YMCA representative
thanked County employees at last
year's CECO luncheon.*

NewsBriefs

Health Benefits & Lifestyle Expo

The County is hosting two Health Benefits and Lifestyle Expos for County employees in August. Employees can participate in health screenings, have their blood pressure taken and body fat measured, talk to the County's health care vendors and partake in some great food. The expos are Aug. 7 in the east courtyard of the County Administration Center, and Aug. 14 in the promenade area by the fountain near Building 2 of the County Operations Center. Both expos run from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Idea Inspirers

Submit a money-saving idea to DIBBS and you could be a winner even if your idea isn't implemented. Now through September, there are some great prizes up for grabs when you submit your new ideas to DIBBS. They include a two-night stay at the Colorado Belle in Laughlin and admission to Sea World. Don't forget—you can submit your DIBBS ideas over the County's Intranet (cww). For more information, call (619) 578-5781 or (619) 578-5779.

San Diegans Empowered

The Health and Human Services Agency recently launched "Empower San Diego," a Web site that connects County residents to essential resources like childcare, health care, job training, jobs and transportation. Located at emPowerSD.com, the site is aimed primarily at the County's CalWORKS consumers.

EmPowerSD.com makes use of cutting edge technology in the delivery of health and human services. San Diego is the first county in the nation to use geographic information system technology in this manner, according to Environmental Systems Research Institute, an internationally-known company that helped develop the site. This innovative Web site is part of the County's continuing effort to enhance services to its customers who are seeking self-sufficiency and self-improvement.

Fitness Show Expanded

CTN is launching expanded segments of its popular senior program, "Feeling Fit Club," beginning Aug. 5. The one-hour programs are set to air Monday through Friday, 8-9 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. The new segments feature more advanced levels of balance, strength and flexibility exercises that seniors can do at home, as well as other information to help seniors stay healthy. CTN's "Feeling Fit Club" is based on exercise programs created by the County's Aging and Independence Services.

Two other popular CTN shows have schedule changes as well. Beginning Aug. 5, County Chronicles airs 7 a.m., 2 p.m. (except when preempted by a Board of Supervisors meeting) and 7 p.m. County Cooks will begin air-

(continued on page 3)



In Walt's Words

Retirement Planning Makes (Dollars and) Sense

Whatever your dreams for retirement, the County offers a wonderful array of plans to help you achieve them.

Along with this spring's major enhancements to our retirement plan, there are two deferred compensation plans, the 401 (a) and the 457 plans. Both let you put money aside now, before taxes, and accumulate it for retirement. Experts tell us the best way to reach a comfortable retirement is to contribute to plans like these on a monthly basis, starting as early in our careers as possible.

Lately, though, most of us have seen losses in our retirement accounts on our quarterly statements. I'm sure it's not news to anyone that the stock market is going through tough times. Faced with these disappointing results, what is the best course of action to take?

Each of us must answer that question for him or herself. But now, more than ever, is a good time to get advice on the best way to invest for your future. The timing couldn't be better for the introduction of a new benefit for County employees called "mPower." This is an online service that can evaluate your investments in either of our deferred compensation plans, and for either of our providers, Hartford or T. Rowe Price.

The Board of Supervisors has generously agreed to pay for this service for all employees for one year, and it became available at the end of July. To use the service, you simply log onto your provider's Web site (retire.hartfordlife.com or rps.troweprice.com) and follow the prompts. All of the information from your account will be captured by mPower.

The service will then guide you through a Q-and-A that will help you determine your personal tolerance for risk, your retirement horizon, your income needs upon retirement and your contribution rate. Based on all of this information, mPower will then recommend a specific mix of investments that are available through your provider. The first time you log on, this process might take 30 to 60 minutes, but it will be much shorter on subsequent visits. You can visit the site as often as you like for an update, but our deferred compensation office recommends that you review your portfolio at least once a year.

After the first year of the program, we'll take a look at how many of you have found it useful and decide whether to continue the service.

I urge all of you to take advantage of this service, or to seek advice from a financial adviser. With all of the investment choices available to us, we need good solid information to help us decide the best place to put our retirement money. And no matter how the market is doing, we all need to be comfortable with the decisions we have made.

That way, when it is time to retire, we can rest easy in the knowledge that our needs will be met and hopefully, our dreams will come true.

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

NewsBriefs

(continued from page 2)

ing twice daily at 12:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

For more information about Feeling Fit Clubs, call (800) 510-2020. CTN program information is available on the Internet at www.ctn.org or by calling (619) 595-4600.

Fair to Raise Awareness of Child Support Issues

To mark Child Support Awareness Month, Child Support Services is hosting a community resource fair on Aug. 17, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Horton Square, behind 225 Broadway (the NBC building), downtown San Diego.

The fair will provide information regarding resources available in the San Diego area for parents who are committed to making a difference in their children's future. Both a national and statewide event, August is proclaimed Child Support Awareness Month to help raise awareness of child support and the services that are available to the public.

Debt Pool Benefits Schools

With the State budget crisis looming, every penny counts—not only for the County, but for other municipalities and districts as well. That's why 10 local school districts were especially grateful to the County for helping them save a chunk of money. The County pooled together with the school districts to issue its 2002 Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANs), saving the districts a total of \$120,000 in both set up and interest expenses.

County Departments Earn Showcase Awards

A display by Planning and Land Use took the "Grand Showcase" award, and HHSA's Family to Family program also won a top award at July's Environmental Systems Research Institute International User Conference, which took place in San Diego.

DPLU's Melanie Casey earned the Grand Showcase award for her geologic hazards coverage graphic. HHSA's David Lindsey, Thomas DeAngelis, George Jones, Lisa Luers, Chad Pollard and Alice

Weed were honored for "Family to Family: Redistributing Foster Care System Resources Geographically." This two-panel poster highlighted how HHSA can use the geographic information systems technology to show where foster children are being placed in relation to their original home environment.

A Hoe-Down of a Harvest

B. Diane Wallace, who recently retired as the head of the County's Farm and Home Advisor office, will be honored at Harvest 4Kids, a fundraising event on Saturday, Sept. 21, at Bell Gardens Farm in Valley Center.

The fundraiser is to support the educational initiatives of both Bell Gardens Farm and the San Diego County 4-H Youth Education Foundation. The festivities stretch from 3 until 10 p.m., with wine-tasting from 11 wineries, a barbecue dinner and lots of entertainment.

Tickets are \$75 per person, or \$875 for a table. For more information, contact Genni Myle at the San Diego County 4-H Youth Education Foundation, (858) 514-4976.

Foster Families Benefit From Donated County Computers

Rows of computers and cables, 15 foster families, County and San Diego Futures Foundation staff were all abuzz at the Polinsky Children's Center on July 20 for the fourth quarterly donation of computers and training provided to local foster families. Since October 2001, the Futures Foundation has supplied computers to 60 families supporting approximately 200 kids.

To be eligible for the computers, foster families must be caring for at least one school-aged child and the youth must have been in the home for at least six months.

Next quarter's donation will include up to 50 foster families, thanks to a donation of computers from Pfizer Pharmaceuticals arranged by members of the Commission on Children, Youth and Families.

The San Diego Futures Foundation is a non profit organization founded by the Pennant Alliance, a group of companies modernizing the information technology infrastructure of the County of San Diego.

Ver•ba•tim

Letters from satisfied customers served by County employees.

Dr. Kerry Mahoney (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) was thanked for providing a gentleman with the answers he needed about how his dog died.

"Knowing why...has been invaluable in helping me with my grief."

Ray Fredericks (Treasurer/Tax Collector) was singled out by a first-time home buyer for his aid on a tax payment problem.

"I would like to inform you that you have a very nice and helpful employee that needs to be recognized. He is an asset in your department."

Martha Butler (Family Resource Center, HHSA) was praised by San Diego Hospice for helping one of their patients.

"Martha worked quickly and courteously and had a lot of knowledge and helped us and his wife before and after the patient died."

Dos Picos Park Rangers received a big "thanks" from a couple who had just returned from a four-day stay there.

"They not only made us feel welcomed, but really went out of their way to be helpful. They really went over and above what anyone would expect."

Elizabeth Simmons (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was commended for helping an elderly woman with a tax bill question.

"I am 87 years old and have never met a more gracious and helpful person than her!"

Gemma Dizon (Family Resource Center, HHSA) was praised for her outstanding service when she helped a woman's parents obtain Medi-Cal coverage.

"My father did not realize that he needed to fill out and return the forms until Gemma gave us a call to follow up on the forms. It feels great to know that there's someone who cares and who's willing to go an extra mile to reach us."

The **Assessor/Recorder/Clerk staff** was thanked for their continual good service.

"Each time I go into your office in the County Building, the same thing happens no matter who I talk to. The 'thing' is the continual good service of your staff which is the best among all government agency operations in the County."

Chris Balan and the **Probation Officers** on Work Project program were commended for their quality and professionalism by a participating site.

"With 12 different dates and six different members of my staff participating, I only heard good things about how easy and well-managed your crews were to work with."

SECOND SHIFT

Customer Service Feeds Vi's After-Hours Success

Vi Talavera loves cooking for people. So it's no surprise that if you show up at this County employee's bar and grill after work, you may get a serving of home cooking—for free.

A child support officer for the County's Child Support Services by day, Talavera owns two bar and grills that she helps manage at night and on the weekends.

"This is the only bar that has free food," Talavera boasts about MJ's, a Chula Vista hang out she's owned since Jan. 2000. "Every time I go into my kitchen to fix something, I give everybody something."

When she and her husband first took over the place, it had few customers. Now, it's full of regulars on the weeknights and is packed on the weekends. The difference, Talavera says, is customer service.

"I treat them like my family," she said.

A native of the Philippines, Talavera moved to San Diego in 1985 and started working for the County in 1989.

Growing up, her family owned a restaurant, so her love for cooking and entertaining others came naturally. In addition to MJ's (on the corner of Third and Orange in Chula Vista), they own Christina's near the Sports Arena.

It's a hectic schedule, especially on the weekends. Talavera starts her day at Christina's at 6 a.m., then heads home at 5 p.m. for an hour nap before gearing up for a packed house at MJ's. But the 49-year-old isn't complaining.

"I feel very blessed that I have this," she said. Besides, the hard work will pay off in the future.

"When I retire, I don't want to work any more," she said. "I just want to enjoy my grandkids and enjoy life. Right now we're working hard, so that when we retire we can enjoy it to the fullest."



Vi Talavera treats her customers like family at her bar and grill.

NewsMakersNewsMakers

C. Ronald Hicks has been named director of General Services. Hicks has more than 28 years of experience in facilities management in both the public and private sector. He recently served as a vice president of 3D/International; his experience includes running his own consulting business, and working in the Office of the President at the University of California.

Deborah Steffan was named director of the Office of Disaster Preparedness. Steffan, who will assume her new post Aug. 12, is currently regional administrator for the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, which serves 11 counties including San Diego. She's been involved with a wide variety of recovery and response operations, such as the 1992 Los Angeles fires and civil unrest, the Northridge earthquake, and the Alaska Airlines Flight 261 crash. She also directed the Southern Region Emergency Operations Center during recent political conventions and Y2K.

Mike Kolb was named Labor Relations Manager for Human Resources. Kolb replaces Madge Blakely who retired after serving in Labor Relations for more than 27 years. Kolb has worked

in Labor Relations for the past eight years. He is president-elect of the California Public Employers' Labor Relations Association.

Willie Cook has been appointed Deputy Director, Human Resources, with responsibility for Classification and Compensation, Recruitment and Selection programs, and PeopleSoft/HR administration. Cook has been with the County three years, with her most recent assignment as ERP Manager.

Trudy Gerald was named Manager of Human Resources' Employee Development and Training Division. Gerald has both public and private sector experience in successfully managing training and employee development activities for large organizations.

District Attorney **Paul Pfingst** was installed as president of the California District Attorneys Association, a professional organization that represents more than 2,000 California prosecutors. His top priority is to help DA offices preserve public safety in the face of budget cut, and he plans to lead a statewide campaign to protect children from sexual predators on the Internet, similar to a program he initiated in San Diego.

County News is published for the 17,000 employees of the County of San Diego.

Board of Supervisors

Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Pam Slater, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5

Chief Administrative Officer

Walter F. Ekard

This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.



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Rene Quaresma, Editor

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DIBBS Submitters Honored



Mindy Tao (left) and Judy Gervais of General Services were among the honorees.

For the first half of 2002, County employees generated a total savings of \$813,563 through the DIBBS (Do It Better By Suggestion) program. At a ceremony in July, 96 suggestion award winners were honored, with cash rewards totaling close to \$50,000.

A complete list of DIBBS awardees is available in "County News Extra," the online version of the newsletter (see staff box for details).

COUNTY NEWS *Extra*

Service Awards

Congratulations to County employees reaching the following milestones in August:

30 years

Robert R. Taylor (Sheriff)
Sally G. McDaniel (District Attorney)
Richard L. Frost (Probation)
Michael G. Meza (Public Works)
Patricia L. Gomez (HHSA)
Nella K. Kressel (HHSA)
Frances E. Perez (HHSA)
Diane E. St. John (HHSA)
Olean Taylor (HHSA)
Sandra L. Tom (Superior Court)
Joy D. Watkins (Superior Court)

25 years

Beverly J. Kaye (Human Resources)
Jerry M. Hughes (Auditor & Controller)
Kathy L. Dobbins (Sheriff)
Theresa Ann Frias (Sheriff)
Benjamin F. Hernandez (Sheriff)
Flora L. Malit (Sheriff)
Carol F. Lovell (Child Support Services)
Ross W. Carlson (Public Works)
Scott R. Watson (Public Works)
Marilyn J. Corodemus (Environmental Health)
Scott Belfield (HHSA)
Teresa A. Morris (Air Pollution Control District)

20 years

Peter Astuto (Sheriff)
George W. Foote (Sheriff)
Donald M. Tapper (Sheriff)
Jack D. Watson (Sheriff)
Charles R. Bolton (Medical Examiner)
Christine A. McFadden (Probation)
George R. Faircloth (Housing & Community Development)
Vickie L. Church (Environmental Health)
Leticia R. Almaraz (Superior Court)
Patricia Whitelaw (Superior Court)

Retirements

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports the following employees recently retired:

Patricia D. Allen
Rosie L. Andrews
Daniel A. Armstrong
Patricia K. Atwill
Yvonne M. Audia
Thomas G. Bedsworth
Richard C. Burhenne
Bernard L. Chase
Sally M. Christensen
Gloria J. Creese
Patricia A. Crigler
Lawrence W. Dill
Jenny S. Dodson
Eva Duran
Manuel C. Frias

Maria D. Gladin
Christine Gomez-Counts
Jacqueline J. Gonzalez
Cheryl L. Griggs
Michael Henry Hellmann
Gregg A. Hoffman
William J. Jakaitis
Sylvia A. Jones
Laraine K. Lemmons
Gale K. Lewis
Torrey J. Lystra
Constance McDade
Cheryl L. McDaniel
Barbara A. Meader
Jan Mehl

John R. Meloy
Diane B. Miller
Ela Jane H. Napolitano
Nancy H. Newport
Charles Nguyen
Angela A. Nyberg
Sonia O. Papsadore
Rita M. Phillips
Elizabeth Quinnett
Marjorie Rempel
Diana Robinson
Primavera C. Santiago
Martha Shields
Michael Silbernagel
Maria Pilar Simpauco

Mike J. Sindelar
Maureen L. Smith
Theresa A. Smith
Henry H. Strandberg
Diane D. Street
Dolores T. Taylor
Janis K. Thomas
Yolanda Thomas
Stephen W. Thunberg
Maryann Valdivia
Gilbert Valero
Cynthia E. Weaver
Delores Wheatbread
Charlene A. Wright

County News Extra includes expanded information about and for County employees. If you have something you'd like considered for either *County News* or *County News Extra*, please contact the newsletter editor at (619) 595-4632 or e-mail at rcarmich@co.san-diego.ca.us. Items can also be faxed to (619) 595-4664 or mailed to MS A-359, Attn: *County News*.

In Memoriam

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports that the following retired employees recently passed away:

Walter Beerly (Animal Control)	6/25	Robert E. Lelievre (Health Services)	5/24
Bernice Burson (Rancho Del Campo)	6/14	Billie-Jo Marler (Health Services)	6/24
Andrew Capp (Sheriff)	6/5	Gypsy McCassey (District Attorney)	6/14
James Christensen (Public Works)	5/21	Ben F. McManama (Transportation)	6/10
Irene M. Gibaud (Welfare)	4/25	Juan F. Silvas (Public Works)	6/11
Leonard Johnson (Treasurer)	6/18	Chaker Suidan (Clerk-Accounting)	6/9
Charles L. Kelley (Sheriff)	6/19	Dorris E. Wigfall (Probation)	5/18
Alan L. Kruse (Sheriff)	3/6		

Our thoughts and prayers are with the friends and families of active County employees Diana Robinson, HHSA (6/6) and Paula L. Sawyer, Sheriff (6/23).

County Captures 14 NACo Achievement Awards

The following County programs were honored with Achievement Awards by the National Association of Counties in July:

A Career Ladder from Clerical Support to Environmental Health Professionals

"Best of Category"

Environmental Health

Environmental Health (DEH) faced a threefold challenge: 1) it has a very talented clerical staff, with little opportunity for advancement; 2) it was increasingly difficult to fill many of its positions due to increased competition with the private sector; 3) minorities are traditionally under-represented in the environmental health career field. As a result, DEH developed the career ladder, which enables qualified clerical staff to transition from a support role to a technical position. The ladder consists of three steps: entry level/technician; intermediate level/trainee; and finally environmental health specialist.

To date, a total of 14 clerical staff have transitioned to technician, and two technicians have promoted to specialist.

Securitization of Tobacco Settlement Revenues

"Best of Category"

Auditor and Controller

Originally, the Tobacco Settlement was to produce \$945 million for the County, over 25 years. Since the amount depended on the success of tobacco companies, the County securitized, or sold, the rights to this revenue. This "sale" produced a net of \$411 million in an endowment fund that can be used to fund health and wellness programs for many years. This innovative action produced a more reliable source of funds for the County, and paved the way for other counties to seek fiscal stability through similar action.

The Border Project to Reduce Teen and Binge Drinking

Health and Human Services Agency

The Border Project is a binational coalition of federal, state and local agencies with the goal of reducing the incidence of crime and health problems resulting from U.S. youth travel-

ing to Mexico to drink alcohol. By establishing appropriate public health and public safety policies within the border region, the project offers a long-term strategy to reduce the problems related to the use of alcohol and drugs, makes the roadways safer for the citizens of San Diego County, provides cost savings for the taxpayers, and improves relations with Mexico.

Energy Management in County Facilities

General Services

The County of San Diego led the region by example in energy conservation efforts from Fall 2000 through Fall 2001. County employees utilized all available resources and techniques, combining their efforts into a cohesive program that allowed the County to exceed goals, maximize customer awareness and bring public awareness to the County's energy conservation efforts. The County's exceptional performance in energy conservation and demand management continues to allow for greater avail-

ability of electricity for County residents and businesses in case of a power crunch, and will continue to save millions of taxpayer dollars that can be used to enhance the health and safety of San Diego residents.

Stormwater Cleanup Efforts

Public Works

In December 2000, the Board of Supervisors initiated several measures to reduce pollution into stormwater, affecting practices in both public capital projects and private development. Within one year the County put in place new County codes, guidance documents outlining best management practices for both public and private projects, assembled a new stormwater strike force for its own maintenance activities and a new group of construction inspectors to ensure use of stormwater pollution reduction practices.

(continued next page)

NACo Awards (continued)

The Dependency Court Recovery Project Public Safety Group

The Dependency Court Recovery Project is a plan that contains a series of changes of practice that are making a qualitative difference in the lives of the children and families served by the dependency system in San Diego County. The ultimate goal of the juvenile dependency process is to achieve a timely and appropriate permanent placement for every child who enters County supervision.

Child Assessment Network – North Health & Human Services Agency

In August 2000, HHSA—along with other government and nonprofit partners—developed the Child Assessment Network-North (CANN) pilot project. The intent was to reduce a major service gap for abused, neglected and abandoned children taken into protective custody in the northern region of the County. Two sites served to assist placing children into kinship or foster homes in their current or nearby communities, rather than removing and transferring children to distant communities.

Customer Service Center Chief Administrative Office

The Customer Service Center is a small, full-service unit that manages a range of customer service issues throughout the organization, offering process improvement assistance, monitoring and measurement instruments, customer feedback data, and training tools. The Center is also responsible for coordinating County-wide web content development through the Web Activities Group. The program is highly replicable, and

has served as a model for other jurisdictions, both nationally and internationally.

Homeless Court Program Public Defender

The Homeless Court Program is a special session of the San Diego Superior Court for the homeless to resolve outstanding misdemeanor cases that arise from the condition of homelessness. Originated by the Office of the Public Defender, the HCP expanded to monthly hearings at local homeless shelters in October 1999. The HCP improves access to court for the homeless and assists the homeless in getting needed services and employment. It brings law to the streets, the court to the shelters and the homeless back to society.

Domestic Violence Response Team Health & Human Services Agency

The Domestic Violence Response Teams offer time-critical support for victims of domestic violence. A DVRT pairs law enforcement with a highly trained advocate who provides crisis intervention to victims and their children at the scene of an emergency response. Supporting the team is a multi-disciplinary team of representatives from the following entities: Law enforcement, Domestic Violence Advocates, Children's Services, Aging and Independence Services, Public Health Nurses, District/City Attorney, Victim Witness Program, and Animal Control/Humane Society.

The purpose of the multi-disciplinary review team is to determine the ongoing status of active cases and to facilitate the provision of services to victims and their families.

Multiple Species Conservation Program Planning and Land Use

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) was established in October 1997 as an integral part of the County's efforts to protect parks and open space. The goals of the 172,000-acre MSCP are to (1) maintain and enhance biological diversity and viable populations of endangered, threatened, and sensitive species and habitats; (2) eliminate the need to list these species as endangered under Federal and State Endangered Species Acts; (3) reduce the costs of the permit process for landowners and public agencies; and (4) streamline the permit process. It is a cooperative effort among the County and other local jurisdictions, State and Federal wildlife agencies and other stakeholders.

Spay/Neuter Incentive Program (SNIP) Animal Control

Successful strategies to enhance public awareness of animal related issues and responsible pet ownership should continue to reduce the reproduction of unwanted or homeless animals and, at the same time, enhance the commitment to animal and public health and safety. The Spay/Neuter Incentive Program (SNIP) works on a simple premise: owners whose sexually-intact pets have been found running loose and ultimately impounded by Animal Control who agree to have their pet spayed or neutered and implanted with microchip identification prior to reclaiming will have normal redemption fees substantially reduced.

Beach Water Quality Information Sharing System

Environmental Health

Environmental Health monitors coastal recreational waters for elevated bacteria levels that may be potentially dangerous to the public. Through a partnership with EARTH's 911, the Surfrider Foundation, and the County, San Diego has the distinction of being the first county in the nation to post beach status data on a single Web page that will eventually post the beach status information for all coastal areas nationwide. An interactive map provides the public with current beach water quality status, and a user interface allows water quality managers to easily update the map from any computer with Internet access.

Public Agencies Can Compete Successfully Auditor & Controller/Office of Revenue and Recovery

The County received a NACo Achievement Award for the process and results of selecting the Office of Revenue and Recovery as its collection agent via the Managed Competition Program. After this division of the Auditor and Controller Department was officially selected in 1999, its leadership redesigned the business processes, with a strong emphasis on customer service and teamwork. The results have been outstanding. In year one, collections exceeded the target by \$1 million, with additional cost savings of \$600,000. In year two, collections exceeded a higher target by \$500,000 with cost savings of \$500,000. Year three has not yet closed its books, but the results will be equally impressive.

Readers Respond!

By Rene Quaresma, County News editor

Thanks once again for all of the great feedback in response to our annual reader survey. I thoroughly enjoyed reading all the comments, even the ones that were supposed to be critical in nature.

How'd we do?

Granted, this isn't a scientific survey, but still it's good to see that your general impression of the newsletter and the job we're doing is better than ever.

You're more likely to frequently read County News, and its regular features, than ever before. Over 91% percent of the respondents "frequently" read *County News*—up from 80% last year. The percentage of people who frequently read NewsBriefs and Walt's Words also jumped significantly.

As with last year, the majority of people think our coverage in the areas of programs, services, policies, events and department and people news is sufficient. But, there is clearly room for improvement. Your opinion of our ability to keep you informed, and do it in a timely manner still isn't "off the charts," but it did increase significantly from the year before. We held our own in the area of "overall layout and design," but received our highest ratings ever on your opinion of *County News* being a well-written publication.

Now, for the rest of the story.

As always, the most valuable part of the survey is the section where you, the readers, get to say what's on your mind. There were a lot of great suggestions, and a lot of questions were raised that really deserve an answer. Here are a few of them:

A lot of articles are long and drawn out. More articles are needed on employees. Also, more fun articles, i.e. what good things employees are doing outside of work.

County News is such a small publication that I try my best to make the articles brief. Sometimes in the editing process, it's pointed out to me that in my brevity, I've left out a key point or two. It's a fine line between too much information and not enough!

As for the articles, you'll notice that just about every month there's an employee feature in the printed version, and sometimes more in the online version. My favorite articles to write are those that highlight the good works of employees. I look forward to continue writing these as long as you keep on supplying me with the great leads!

Event dates are frequently history by the time I receive my copy. Timely distribution needs improvement.

Believe me, this aggravates me as well. It typically is five to six working days from the time *County News* goes to print until the time it goes out in the mail. From that point on, I have no control over how long it takes to get distributed to each employee. For some, it's a matter of minutes. For others, it's a matter of days.

I try really hard to make sure there aren't events listed that will be history by the time a reader gets his or her copy, but I can't guarantee it. What would really help is for people to think of contacting *County News* two months ahead of their event, instead of a couple of weeks. That way we can make sure we can get the word out as early as possible.

Would like to see greater representation from all departments.

Me too! But I can only write about the departments that contact me with story ideas or send in announcements, accomplishments or verbatim submissions. So, make sure you include *County News* on your distribution list when there's good news to report.

Why are service awards and in memoriam excluded from the hard copy prints?

A few years ago, service awards, in memoriam and retirements were deleted from the newsletter after a reader survey showed these features didn't rate high with employees. A small, yet very vocal, minority have asked to have them back, so we created a special online version of the newsletter mainly so that we'd have a place to publish these features. It's been incredibly well-received. Thanks to those of you who noticed and wrote with your favorable comments.

Could you please give the department of people who are retiring?

The list I publish is the list I receive from the San Diego County Employees Retirement Association. Unfortunately, it's just names so I can't provide anything more to you.

Delete Verbatim – each department has own newsletters where employees get recognized.

While I would hate to delete Verbatim altogether, it's worth a look to see if this feature might better be suited for the online version, to allow more space for other stories, especially those highlighting county services and programs. While I can't commit to anything at this time, it's definitely an idea worth exploring.

There's so much going on countywide and you don't even scratch the surface.

You're so right. There is a lot going on and we don't scratch the surface. We could be putting in more announcements, sharing more stories about department accomplishments and even broadening it to marriages and births. Not everything would fit in the printed version, but with the expanded online version—the sky's the limit!

Many of you sent in ideas about articles you'd like to see and I'll do my best to give these topics more coverage. But, again, your help is always welcomed. Any time you hear about something that you think would be interesting in the newsletter, please feel free to give me a call at (619) 595-4632. I might not be able to print everything, but I'd love the opportunity to consider it.

DIBBS Awardees from the July 24 Ceremony

Air Pollution Control District:

BILL BRICK

Award: \$50 – Intangible

Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk:

SHERYL CHASTEEN & CONNIE TOMLISON

Award: \$1,000 – Productivity

Savings: \$47,060

Suggestion: Recommended providing copies of microfiched master property records in the Public Information section. Their suggestion improved customer service.

YOLY RIGONAN

Award: \$105 – Tangible

Savings: \$700

Suggestion: Recommended changing the detailed Fee Report to a summary report. Her suggestion saved paper.

DIANNE FRAZIER, MIKE KVEEN

Award: \$50 – Intangible

Auditor & Controller:

CHERI PECK

Award: \$384 – Productivity

Savings: \$7,679

Suggestion: Ms. Peck recommended reducing warehouse work by organizing warrants in boxes by paid date order. Her suggestion saved staff time.

BETTY JEAN VAN GEEST

Award: \$50 – Productivity

Savings: \$901

Suggestion: Recommended implementing standard operating procedures for Microsoft PowerPoint in the Registrar of Voters Office. Her idea saved time training staff on the use of Microsoft PowerPoint.

KIMBERLY BRUNJES

Award: \$50 – Intangible

Child Support Services:

VERONICA WESOLOWSKI

Award: \$1,000 – Productivity

Savings: \$344,187

Suggestion: Recommended using Microsoft Excel to provide a caseload management system. Her idea improved caseload referrals, maintained referrals, provided statistical data and saved staff time.

MICHELLE KROGMAN

Award: \$206 – Tangible

Savings: \$1,375

Suggestion: Recommended using a different vendor to supply plain non-static ziplock bags in bulk for moving keyboards, surge protectors and other computer equipment. Her suggestion reduced purchasing cost on this project.

ROBERTO MONTES

Award: \$50 – Intangible

Clerk of the Board:

CLAIRE TOSH

Award: \$50 – Tangible

Savings: \$49

Suggestion: Recommended reducing the number of hard copies produced for the draft Statement of Proceedings. Her suggestion saved one ream of paper per month.

ADAIR GOMEZ

Award: \$50 – Intangible

County Counsel:

WALTER BITTS

Award: \$50 – Intangible

District Attorney:

PATRICK ZVARA

Award: \$217 – Productivity

Savings: \$4,340

Suggestion: Recommended bundling and simplifying the assembly of Orientation packet appendices in order. His idea saved staff time.

DORRIE LEUKHARDT, TAMARA PETERS

MARLENE ZUNIGA-ARMENTA

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

PAT GOODMAN, LYNNETTE RICE

Awards: \$50 (2) – Intangible

FLORINDA JOHNSON

ODETTE ORTEGA

Awards: \$50 (2) – Intangible

DIBBS Awards (continued)

Environmental Health:

STEVE DURHAM

Award: \$5,996 – Tangible
Savings: \$43,296
Suggestion: Recommended using an existing under utilized server for relocating the KIVA application. His idea eliminated a budget expense for a proposed new server.

LEON WIRCHEM

Award: \$555 – Productivity
Savings: \$11,087
Suggestion: Recommended using a new check list format on common inspection items for reports. His idea has saved staff time and provided a positive format for feedback to the community.

DANNY MARTINEZ

Award: \$363 – Productivity & Tangible
Savings: \$4,662
Suggestion: Recommended e-mailing meeting notices instead of using post cards. His idea improved customer service and saved staff time stuffing numerous envelopes.

SIU FAN, JAMES HENDERSON, TOM LAMBERT ALICIA LICUDAN, STEVEN WATERBURY

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

General Services:

MINDY TAO

Award: \$3,300 - Tangible
Savings: \$22,000
Suggestion: Recommended installing a previously used generator and transfer switch as an emergency generator at Rancho del Campo. Her suggestion saved the cost of purchasing a new generator.

JUDY GERVAIS

Award: \$2,970 - Tangible
Savings: \$19,800
Suggestion: Recommended using an advanced patent technology called Precision Lighting where daylight harvesting of natural light working in conjunction with fluorescent lighting reduces electrical costs.

NADINE ARMENTA

Award: \$135 - Productivity
Savings: \$2,693
Suggestion: Recommended having the Mail center pickup manila envelopes from a subcontractor and deliver to the mailroom. Her suggestion saved staff time transporting large loads of mail up and down elevators and stairs.

CELESTE ENGLISH, RON PHIFE

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

Health & Human Services Agency:

TIMOTHY NEAIPOEUNG

Award: \$1,000 - Productivity
Savings: \$64,523
Suggestion: Recommended computerizing budget worksheet form #12-42 DSS in Microsoft Excel. His suggestion assisted Social Workers by simplifying and improving accuracy of the calculation process for determining client service hours.

JOANNE MILLGATE

Award: \$172 - Tangible
Savings: \$1,150
Suggestion: Recommended nurses make notations on doctor's orders when medications are obtained from the night cabinet. Her idea eliminated duplicate orders from the pharmacy and saved staff time.

LOUISE GRESHAM

Award: \$102 - Tangible
Savings: \$678
Suggestion: Recommended providing online access to many HHSA journals subscriptions. Her suggestion saved staff time copying and distributing numerous copies of journals to staff.

HELEN ANTONIAK, DOMINIQUE GUILLOCHON SANDRA GUITERREZ, SHARON IVERSON MARION MORRIS, DIANA OJEDA, NATALIE ROSE LIDIA SANCHEZ, TERRY SINSAY

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

Housing & Community Development:

DEBORAH DYAR

Award: \$3,287 - Tangible
Savings: \$21,910
Suggestion: Recommended discontinuing the contract for Champions software and use a free software called FRS to manage Section 8 and Public Housing rental assistance programs. Her idea saved the cost of installing a similar product, ended the previous contract three months early and saved staff time on duplicate entries.

BRENDA BELL, PEGGY GOLDSTEIN JOAN HERSKOWITZ, MARCIA INGRAM SUSAN QUASARANO, APRIL TORBETT

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

DIBBS Awards (continued)**ELIZABETH MAROHN, APRIL TORBETT**

Awards: \$50 (2) - Intangible

**GLORIA BUTLER, LYNN DIAMOND, JAFAR IZADI
HUGO MORA**

Awards: \$50 - Intangible (4)

Human Resources:**CHRISTINE WHEELER**

Award: \$679 - Productivity & Tangible

Savings: \$4,524

Suggestion: Recommended canceling the colored copier maintenance agreement at the Beech Street location. Her suggestion saved the cost of renewing an unnecessary maintenance contract.

ROSEMARIE SIMPSON

Award: \$90 - Productivity

Savings: \$1,794

Suggestion: Recommended sending Nurse Manager reports electronically to one person instead of sending them to many people by mail. Her suggestion provided system improvement, which increased office efficiency.

Media & Public Relations:**BARBARA CASSADY**

Award: \$50 - Intangible

Medical Examiner:**TERE BECKMAN**

Award: \$236 - Tangible

Savings: \$1,575

Suggestion: Ms. Beckman built and designed a portable screen to place around the deceased located in open areas to shield from public view. Her idea provided an innovative solution to enhance the performance of examinations on site.

Planning & Land Use:**DEBORAH (D.J.) MC LAUGHLIN**

Award: \$537 - Productivity & Tangible

Savings: \$8,699

Suggestion: Recommended using labels to identify incoming documents instead of stamps. Her idea saved staff time, reduced the risk of repetitive stress injuries and improved the process.

BARBARA (B.J.) MULVEY

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

Probation:**MICHAEL MARCHAND**

Award: \$218 - Tangible

Savings: \$1,450

Suggestion: Recommended using the existing laundry facilities at Juvenile Hall to wash vests worn by public service workers. His suggestion saved revenue paid out at a higher cost to a private vendor versus using in-house laundry services.

LINDA YOAKUM-LATIMER

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

Public Works:**GREG WESTON**

Award: \$4,344 - Tangible

Savings: \$28,963

Suggestion: Recommended a plan to complete the clean closure of San Ysidro Burn site within a short timeframe rather than covering the site with 2 feet of dirt and continue maintaining it in the future. His project enabled staff to manage the process, saved the cost of inspections by regulatory agencies and provided substantial savings.

LAWRENCE KLISURA

Award: \$2,430 - Tangible

Savings: \$16,200

Suggestion: Recommended transferring unused radios from solid waste vehicles to Stormwater vehicles. His suggestion saved the cost of buying six new radios.

MICHAEL KOCH

Award: \$1,038 - Tangible

Savings: \$6,923

Suggestion: Recommended eliminating temporary reflectorized pavement markers along the right edge line of the roadway and substitute non-reflective markers. His suggestion saved revenue by using the smaller non-reflective markers to preserve edge line location.

TYRONE BERLANGA & ROY WHITE

Award: \$189 - Productivity & Tangible

Savings: \$1,660

Suggestion: Recommended using the copy machine for producing photographic duplicate prints in the mapping section. Their idea saved staff time and material cost.

DIBBS Awards (continued)

GEORGE DEVOID

Award: \$192 - Tangible
Savings: \$1,277
Suggestion: Recommended traveling to the Pala Plant to pick-up paint instead of traveling to the Kearny Mesa Hanson Plant. His suggestion saved travel time.

MAX CALDER, TIM CAULDER, C.V. BILL SVENSSON

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

Registrar of Voters:

BERNADINE DAVIS

Award: \$685 - Productivity
Savings: \$13,702
Suggestion: Recommended adding a Personal Computer to the mail desk. Her suggestion improved productivity and office efficiency.

MARIA ALVARADO & MARCIANNA NYLUND

Award: \$50 - Productivity
Savings: \$547
Suggestion: Recommended mailing voter registration supply request inquiries instead of calling each location. Their suggestions saved staff time.

VICKI CHAPPELL

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

Sheriff:

ORVAL JONES

Award: \$4,393 – Tangible
Savings: \$32,926
Suggestion: Recommended eliminating unnecessary telephones at the Central Jail. His suggestion saved monthly service charges to unused telephones and contract cost.

DAVID SCHULTZ

Award: \$642 – Productivity
Savings: \$12,841
Suggestion: Recommended to discontinue writing Arrest reports for simple marijuana possession and instead use a citation continuation form. His suggestion saved report writing and approval time for staff.

MICHELE DELOZIER COLLINS

Award: \$88 – Tangible
Savings: \$589
Suggestion: Recommended replacing trigger snaps on leather key ring holders instead of replacing the entire unit. Her suggestion saved the cost of buying the entire new key holders versus replacing a worn part.

Treasurer/Tax Collector:

LINDA GRACE, FRANK STUBBS

Award: \$50 – Intangible